



PRESS RELEASE

Baltimore Pharmacists Plead Guilty to Medicaid Fraud

BALTIMORE, MD (April 24, 2008) - Attorney General Douglas F. Gansler announced today that two pharmacists pled guilty to Medicaid Fraud for defrauding the Medicaid program of more than \$400,000. Norton Grossblatt, 67, owner of Purdum Pharmacy in Towson, pled guilty in the Circuit Court for Baltimore County. Harvey Rapkin, 70, of Pikesville, pled guilty in the Circuit Court for Baltimore City and will be sentenced on September 23, 2008. No date has been set for Grossblatt's sentencing.

The fraud scheme began in 2002 while Rapkin was employed at Baltimore Behavioral Health (BBH) in South Baltimore. His job was to obtain prescription refills for BBH and then distribute the medications to patients. The Medicaid program paid for most of these prescriptions. Rapkin employed the services of his longtime friend Grossblatt to fill many of the Medicaid prescriptions. Over time, Rapkin noticed that although he was routinely getting monthly prescriptions filled, the patients frequently did not come in to pick up the medicine.

Rapkin took the leftover Medicaid prescriptions home with him and sold them back to Grossblatt for half the usual cost of the drugs. Grossblatt then filled the next month's prescriptions reusing the pills and billed Medicaid again for the same pills. This scheme went on every month for nearly two years. Problems arose when the number of pills Grossblatt legitimately purchased fell far short of the number of pills for which he billed Medicaid. In all, over a two year period, Grossblatt billed Medicaid for nearly 90,000 pills that he obtained from Rapkin. Rapkin and Grossblatt each netted nearly \$200,000 from the scheme.

The case was prosecuted by the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) of the Maryland Attorney General's Office and was referred to the Unit by the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Maryland, who also participated in the investigation in this matter.